

# Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/827,002

Examiner

Phuong-Thao Cao

Applicant(s)

FUSE ET AL.

Art Unit

2164

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Amendment filed on 7/18/2007.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-8, 10, 12 and 13.
3. ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
  - a) ☒ All   b) ☐ Some\*   c) ☐ None   of the:
    1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
    2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
    3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* Certified copies not received: \_\_\_\_\_.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.  
**THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.**

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
  5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS ( as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
    - (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review ( PTO-948) attached
      - 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
    - (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

## Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit  
of Biological Material

5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413),  
Paper No./Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_
7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

  
**CHARLES RONES**  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER

## EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

1. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Attorney Joseph W. Price (Reg. No. 25,124) on September 26, 2007.

The application has been amended as follows:

Claims 1, 8 and 11 are amended as follows: (the addition is underlined)

### **Claim 1**

An approval authority registration system which comprises terminals, a database, and a database management apparatus interconnected via a network, wherein one or more pieces of approval relation information, each of which indicates a relationship between an approval-authorized person and an approval object person who are both users of the approval authority registration system and indicates an effective period of the relationship, have been registered with the database, wherein

the database management apparatus includes:

a receiving unit configured to receive, from a user via a terminal, a registration request requesting registration of a new piece of approval relation information with the database;

a first judging unit configured to judge whether the user who input the registration request matches either an approval-authorized person or an approval object person specified in the requested piece of approval relation information;

a second judging unit configured to, only when the first judging unit has judged that the user matches neither the specified approval-authorized person nor the specified approval object person, judge whether there is a no-approval-authorized-person period between an effective period indicated by the new piece of approval relation information and an effective period indicated by a piece of approval relation information which is one of the one or more pieces of approval relation information having been registered with the database and indicates a same approval object person as the new piece of approval relation information; and

a registration unit configured to register the new piece of approval relation information with the database when the second judging unit has judged that there is no no-approval-authorized-person period, and provide a warning that there is the no-approval-authorized-person period and prevent the new piece of approval relation information from being registered with the database when the second judging unit has judged that there is the no-approval-authorized-person period.

#### **Claim 8**

The approval authority registration system of Claim 1, wherein  
each piece of approval relation information to be registered and having been registered with the database includes responsible person classification information that indicates whether an

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approval-authorized person specified in the piece of approval relation information is a responsible or proxy, wherein

if the receiving unit receives a piece of approval relation information with responsible person classification information indicating that an approval-authorized person is proxy, the first judging unit judges whether the user who input a registration request requesting registration of the received piece of approval relation information matches a responsible person indicated by a piece of approval relation information that has already been registered with the database, and

the second judging unit judges whether there is the no-approval-authorized-person period when the first judging unit has judged that the user who input the registration request matches the responsible person.

#### **Claim 11**

Cancel claim 11.

2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The present invention is directed to an improved approval authority registration system/method in workflow environment which processes and manages registration information including relationship between an approval-authorized person and an approval object person and an effective period of the relationship.

The closest prior art of record, Nishihara et al. (EP Publication No EP 1 033 666) teaches an approval authority registration system in workflow environment by registering users with its roles (i.e., approval-authorized person and approval object person), and registering user as a substitute user with an expired day (see paragraphs [0046], [0048] and [0051]).

However, Nishihara et al. fails to anticipate or render obvious the recited feature of judging whether there is a no-approval-authorized-person period between an effective period indicated by the new piece of approval relation information and an effective period indicated by a piece of approval relation information which is one of the one or more pieces of approval relation information having been registered with the database and indicates a same approval object person as the new piece of approval relation information and the recited feature of providing a warning that there is the no-approval-authorized-person period and preventing the new piece of approval relation information from being registered with the database when the second judging unit has judged that there is the no-approval-authorized-person period, as in independent claims 1, 10 and 12.

These features, together with the other limitations of the independent claims are novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. The dependent claims 2-8 and 13 being definite, enabled by the specification, and further limiting to the independent claim, are also allowable.

Claim 12 recites computer readable recording medium which is not defined in the specification. However, the term “computer readable recording medium” is interpreted as

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computer storage medium which does not include transmission medium, signals or any other form of energy.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

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3. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Phuong-Thao Cao whose telephone number is (571) 272-2735.

The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30 AM - 5:00 PM (Mon - Fri).

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles Rones can be reached on (571) 272-4085. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

Phuong-Thao Cao  
Art Unit 2164  
January 9, 2008

  
CHARLES RONES  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER